

## NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

### **THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW YOUR MEDICAL INFORMATION MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION.**

*Please review this information carefully.*

#### **Understanding Your Health Record Information**

Each time you visit GYN-OB Associates; a record of your encounter is made. Typically, this record contains a reason for the visit, your symptoms, examination and test results, diagnoses, treatment, and a plan for future care. This information is your health record and it:

- Serves as a basis for planning your care and treatment
- Is a means of communication among health care professionals who contribute to your care
- Is a legal document that allows you or a third-party payer (e.g., insurance company) to verify that services billed were actually provided
- Is used to educate health care professionals as a source of data for medical research
- Is a source of information for public health professionals who are responsible for improving the nation's health

Understanding what is in your record and how your health information is used helps you to:

- Ensure its accuracy
- Better understand who, what, when, where, and why others may have access to your health information
- Make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosure to others (Example: Disclosure of your health information to your employer and/or insurance company to process disability forms would need to be authorized by you in writing.)

#### **Your Health Information Rights**

Your health record is the physical property of GYN-OB Associates, however, the information contained within your health record belongs to you. As a patient, you have the right to make certain requests, which must be made in writing and forwarded to our Office Manager or Privacy Officer. You have the right to:

- Receive a paper copy of our notice of privacy practices
- Inspect and obtain a copy of your health record
- Request amendments of your health information
- Request restrictions on use and/or disclosure of your health information
- Request confidential communications
- Request an accounting of disclosures of your health information not related to treatment, payment, or health care operations
- Revoke your authorization to use or disclose health information except to the extent that has already been taken

## Our Responsibilities

GYN-OB Associates is required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy of your health information.
- Provide you with a notice as to our legal responsibilities and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about you
- Accommodate reasonable requests you may have regarding your health information
- Abide by the terms of this notice

We reserve the right to change our practices and to make new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain. Should our privacy practices change, we will post a revised notice in our office. We will not use or disclose your health information without your authorization, except as described in this notice.

## The Following Notice Describes How Your Medical Information May Be Used

GYN-OB Associates may use your health information for:

- **Treatment:** Information obtained by a physician, nurse practitioner, or other healthcare provider will be recorded in your record and used to determine the course of treatment that is best suitable for you.
- **Payment:** When a bill is sent to you or a third-party payer (e.g., insurance company), it may include identifying information about you such as your diagnosis, procedures, and supplies used.
- **Regular Health Operations:** Health information may be used to assess the care and outcomes in your case and others like it. This information will then be used in an effort to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of the healthcare and services we provide.
- **Business Associates:** There are some services provided to patients of GYN-OB Associates through contracted business associates. Examples include physician services, radiology, certain laboratory tests, and off-site medical record storage. We may disclose your health information to our contracted business associates so that they can perform the job we've asked them to do and bill you or your third-party payer for services rendered. However, all business associates are required by law to appropriately protect your health information.
- **Notification:** We may contact you to provide appointment reminders.
- **Food and Drug Administration (FDA):** We may disclose to the FDA health information relative to adverse events with respect to prescribed medications and/or products. We may also disclose post-marketing surveillance information to enable product recalls, repairs, or replacement.



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- **Workers Compensation:** We may disclose health information to the extent authorized by the laws relating to workers compensation.
- **Public Health:** As required by law, we may disclose your health information to public health or legal authorities charged with preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability.
- **Correctional Institution:** If you are an inmate of a correctional institution, we may disclose to the institution or agents thereof, any health information necessary to protect the health and safety of you and other individuals.
- **Law enforcement:** We may disclose health information for law enforcement purposes as required by law, or in response to a valid subpoena. Federal law makes provisions for your health information to be released to an appropriate health agency or attorney.

This notice is effective as of April 14, 2003. If you have questions or would like additional information, you may contact the Office Manager at (508) 679-7350. If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you can file a complaint in writing with our office or with the Department of Health & Human Services. There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint. For more information about HIPAA or to file a complaint you can contact:

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Office of Civil Rights  
200 Independence Avenue  
S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201  
202-619-0257 or Toll Free 1-877-686-6775